

Chapter 2 *Action Planning*

Module 5: Action Planning Tools

Step Up and Step Out with action planning tools!

There are several different tools you can use during the action planning process to ensure that your efforts result in successful outcomes! The tools presented in this module are:

1. Strategies for environmental change
2. Timelines
3. Forms and records



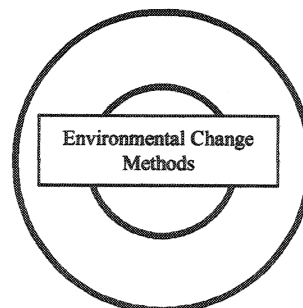
Environmental change

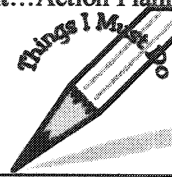
Environmental change means modifying factors individuals encounter in their daily life that influence the choices they make. There are many different types of community changes your coalition can consider to accomplish the goal of increased opportunities for healthy eating and activity choices.

Finding what you want to change is usually easy. Coming up with action plans to make that change can be a little more challenging. The environmental change strategies below give you an idea of the different types of changes that can be made.

Strategies for environmental change

Strategies are methods to create environmental change. The strategies suggested in Step Up and Step Out can be used alone, but when they are used together they create a strong circle of change that is difficult to break.





Strategies in action!

Environmental Change Methods

- ♥ **Policy**—Changes in the formalized guidelines for how things are done
- ♥ **Collaboration**—Working with others to make change
- ♥ **Repetition**—Repeating a message or action
- ♥ **Education**—Increasing awareness or providing skills
- ♥ **Support**—Helping others to make changes
- ♥ **Reward**—Creating a reason to make a change

Policy

Policies should be implemented with as much input from all those affected by the policy as possible. It may be helpful, in some cases, to begin with a 'trial period' to see if the policy can be implemented as it is written. There are many different policies that may be considered. School policies would involve:

Examples:



- ♥ Nutrition and physical activity curriculum
- ♥ Availability of healthy choices for a la carte items, snack bars, and vending machines
- ♥ Fund raisers that send a consistent message about food choices
- ♥ Classroom parties that include healthy choices

Collaboration



Partners working together, sharing responsibilities, rewards, and resources to achieve a common goal is what makes the coalition. Collaboration can save time and money, and is the best strategy to avoid conflict!

Examples:



- ♥ The community collaborating to use high school tennis courts
- ♥ The coalition collaborating with arts & crafts fair organizers to provide healthy choices
- ♥ The high school drama coach collaborating with the recreation department to produce a summer play

Repetition

Change doesn't happen overnight and often requires trying something quite a few different times before it becomes an accepted practice. Repeated opportunities to taste healthy foods can change food attitudes. Repetition in practicing skills for making healthy choices leads to habits.

Examples:



- ♥ Planning for some type of physical activity at every PTO meeting
- ♥ A healthy message discussed in the classroom, published in a newsletter, presented in a school meal theme, and given in a take-home assignment

Education



Education is necessary to improve knowledge and skills. At times, education creates a “need to know,” or the reason for a particular change to prevent conflict. Other times there is a need to just inform everyone a change has been made so that it can be tried—a form of marketing.

Examples:



- ♥ Community education about how all foods can fit, so that coalition members are not made to feel like “diet police” or so that some food producers do not feel economically threatened
- ♥ Nutrition and physical education curriculum in schools
- ♥ Educational articles in newspapers and newsletters
- ♥ Homework assignments that educate and provide opportunities for practicing healthy choices.

Support



Creating an environment that makes change easier is a key manner of support. Other forms of support include providing resources, or encouragement, and giving recognition. These things can make all the difference in the world to success.

Examples:



- ♥ Support from the principal to implement a formal nutrition curriculum

- ♥ Administrative support to make time and funds for resources available
- ♥ State support to develop nutrition and physical activity curriculum outcome standards
- ♥ Support of business involvement in the coalition through recognition

Reward



The best way to motivate people to make change is through reward. Verbal praise is an effective yet simple reward. Small prizes or coupons can also reinforce messages. Reward can be in the form of support and recognition. Good relationships (teamwork and social opportunities), successful results, and respect are also good rewards.

Another not often recognized reward is a self-reward (internal reward) that comes from setting goals and monitoring progress. Internal rewards aren't dependent on anyone or a physical object. Internal rewards include the thrill of a challenge, fun, creativity, or the desire to learn.

Examples:



- ♥ Customers choosing low-fat milk at fast food restaurants are given coupons for 30 cents off an entrée, a financial reward
- ♥ Ice-skating is a fun activity and a thrill for many people, providing an internal reward for engaging in physical activity
- ♥ Teachers are recognized in newsletters and newspaper articles for innovative nutrition and physical activities

Using multiple environmental change strategies



Two examples found at the end of the module demonstrate how all six of the suggested environmental change methods can be applied to an identified objective. There is also a blank a worksheet for you to practice using these methods (strategies) on an objective your coalition has planned.

Timelines



Timelines are very helpful to allow everyone to see the “big picture” and keep them on track so that too many things are not scheduled at one time. They also help to use resources efficiently. Timelines would normally specify the activity or task to be completed with an attached calendar. It might also specify the individuals responsible.

Example



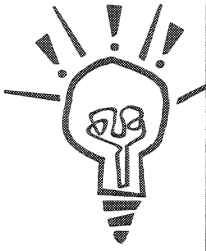
Two-Year Coalition Timeline

Activity	Responsible Parties	Year _____												Year _____											
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Physical Activity in the Classroom	4 th and 5 th Grade Teachers				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x							
Health Fair	Education Committee					x												x							
Community Review	Full Coalition	x					x							x					x						

Planning Forms



The planning forms found throughout this manual are also valuable tools. Taking the time to keep planning forms upfront can make a world of difference. It could mean the difference between repeating an event or not. The forms keep you from re-inventing the wheel and are a good method for tracking changes to celebrate steps to success!

**Module Tip:**

The action planning tools presented in this module provide a means by which to organize thoughts; record steps to taking actions; and review results. They will be valuable resources for future endeavors.

FAQs:

- ❑ **Question:** Do the environmental change strategies always need to be used?
Answer: Any method that works for your coalition and produces successful results can be used. With so many things to consider, it is easier to have a 'system' for planning changes. The environmental change strategies are a good way to organize your thoughts. They become easier to use with practice.
- ❑ **Question:** Who should keep the records of planning forms?
Answer: It will be much easier to organize, if one person has responsibility for making sure the forms are available for use, provides reminders to use them, and then keeps them on file. Consider creating a position of recorder in the coalition.

Module Glossary:

Collaboration: Partners working together and sharing resources to create change.

Environmental Change: A change in factors individuals encounter in their daily life, that influence the decisions they make.

Internal reward: A reward that is not dependent on another person or thing. Internal rewards can include the thrill of a challenge, fun, creativity, curiosity, control (self-responsibility) or desire to learn.

Policy: Written, formal guideline(s) for how to proceed in a particular situation.

Timeline: A written outline of actions organized by date for completion.

Example



Environmental Change Method (Strategy) Worksheet

<p>Description of Environmental Change:</p>	<p>Fast food restaurants will increase and market the number of healthy food choices.</p>
<p>Strategy of Environmental Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy • Collaboration • Repetition • Education • Support • Reward 	<p><u>Collaboration</u>: Talk with fast food restaurants to develop and promote healthy "value packs" with items already on their menus. Suggestions: include milk instead of soft drinks with kid's meals; fruit such as packaged apple slices or pineapple chunks instead of french fries.</p> <p><u>Repetition</u>: Repeat daily during a specified time period before evaluating and revising.</p> <p><u>Education/Support</u>: Enlist the support of community members to patronize and purchase the healthy meals. Enlist the help of local media to report on the healthy changes.</p> <p><u>Reward</u>: Provide incentives for patrons to choose the healthy meal, i.e., a voucher for 50 cents off the next healthy meal, or 1-hour free swim time at local facilities.</p>
<p>Positive Aspects of the Change:</p>	<p>The restaurant receives increased recognition. Increased community awareness of healthy eating.</p>
<p>Negative Aspects of the Change:</p>	<p>Patrons benefit nutritionally.</p>
<p>List Who Should be involved:</p>	<p>Coalition time required for action steps. The profit of margin may change for restaurants; they may be limited by franchise rules as to what is possible; restaurant may be reluctant based on poor reception of low fat items in the past.</p>
<p>Specify Funds Needed:</p>	<p>Restaurant/franchise owners; coalition/community members; media such as newspaper, television and radio.</p>
<p>Other Considerations:</p>	<p>None to minimal if vouchers.</p>
	<p>Don't discriminate among restaurants.</p>



Environmental Change Method (Strategy) Worksheet



Description of Environmental Change:	Healthy snacks provided at classroom parties, and for special school events, such as open house, parent/teacher conferences, field trips
Strategy for Environmental Change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy • Collaboration • Repetition • Education • Support • Reward 	<p>Policy: Request parents include healthy snack options for classroom parties</p> <p>Collaboration: Develop healthy snack recipes in classroom and take home the ideas</p> <p>Repetition: Develop habits by providing healthy snacks during Friday free reading time</p> <p>Education: Provide education of healthy snack ideas through curriculum, newsletters, displays, and classes</p> <p>Support: Ask for support for healthy snacks in the form of food donations</p> <p>Reward: Provide recognition of parents and teachers through interviews, articles, and bulletin boards, pictures</p>
Positive Aspects of the Change:	Supports the "All Foods Can Fit" concept, connects with the idea that healthy foods CAN be tasty; a beginning for channeling healthy eating in other situations
Negative Aspects of the Change:	Difficult to make the change and sustain it, outside the norm; requires more education, training, and communication than the traditional "Kool-Aid and cookie party" concept
List Who Should be involved:	Administration, school board, class room teachers, students, parents, coalition, business/community supporters
Specify Funds Needed:	Food, supplies, printing costs
Other Considerations:	



Environmental Change Method (Strategy) Worksheet



Description of Environmental Change:	
Strategy for Environmental Change: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy• Collaboration• Repetition• Education• Support• Reward	
Positive Aspects of the Change:	
Negative Aspects of the Change:	
List Who Should be involved:	
Specify Funds Needed:	
Other Considerations:	